



NORTH CAROLINA MILITARY AFFAIRS COMMISSION

Minutes of the Quality of Life (QOL) Committee Meeting, 2nd Quarter, April 23, 2020 Microsoft Teams/Conference Call number

MEMBERS PRESENT

Kirk Warner, Chairman
Julie Daniels
Gerald "Rudy" Rudisill
Patricia Harris
Bill Hatcher

NCMAC MEMBERS ABSENT:

Edward Reeder

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES

Alice Dean, NCNG, Children and Youth Programs
Joseph Peek, Cumberland County Schools
Kevin Bruch, DoD State Liaison Office
Jamie Livengood, Wayne County Schools
Valerie Nasser, Craven County Schools
Cristy Barnes-Williams, Seymour Johnson AFB
Julie Fulton, MCI-East
Rollie Sampson, Moore County Schools
Brittany Norman, Onslow County Schools
Donna Grady, Camp Lejeune
Leafe Palmer, MCAS Cherry Point
Mike Scalise, Camp Lejeune/NCCC
Bryan Ayers, Camp Lejeune/NCCC
Ron Massey, City of Jacksonville
LTC David Baker, NC National Guard
LaTanya Pattillo, Office of the Governor
Hayley Young, DHHS
Madhu Vulimiri, DHHS
Kelly Jackson, DMVA

OPENING REMARKS: CHAIRMAN KIRK WARNER

Chairman Kirk Warner called the meeting to order at 10:05 and welcomed everyone to the Quality of Life meeting. He conducted a roll call of the attendees. There were 5 of the 6 members in attendance for a quorum.

CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Warner said that the committee had a quorum and would approve the 1st Quarter draft Quality of Life minutes from the January 23, 2020. Patricia Harris made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Gerald Rudisill Jr and passed by unanimous vote.

K-12 AND DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (DPI) UPDATES/ISSUES:

Rollie Sampson gave an update on the Purple Star Program. She has had some communication with Dr. Angie Mullennix about the program. There are approximately 112 awardees throughout the State, from around military installations to the NC mountains. It was a fair representation of the State. Even with the short timeline they felt it was successful. NC is the seventh state to have a program like this and a step in the right direction. She thinks that they will tweak a few things for the next round of

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Applications. Chairman Kirk Warner said that this information was great. He heard that there were 130 applicants with 112 of them being awarded. Rollie Sampson said that was correct. She said that in Moore County they had 20 of the 24 Counties apply for the program. Wayne County had 20 schools receive the award and Craven County had 16 schools receive the award. She thought that Onslow County had 8 schools receive the award, but she was not sure about Cumberland County. These are individual schools and not the school districts. Chairman Warner asked if there are additional programs or things that they can add in a text form to say we are doing this, or this is something unique that we are doing. If they can do that, is there the ability to share that information with other schools or other applicants to say this is a good idea from a school. Rollie Sampson said that she thought there was a plan to highlight unique ideas or programs at the award ceremony but all of that was on hold at this time. She hopes that the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) will put out a list of best practices from the awardees. She will ask Dr. Mullennix about that list of best practices. She said the biggest challenge is that everything has been put on hold because of COVID-19. There was supposed to be a big celebration to recognize the awardees at the end of April and then update all of the Report Cards. They would like to see this designation put on the Report Card as soon as possible so that the families moving into the areas can have that information. She was hoping that information would be shared soon as to the way forward. They are hoping that they can do a Virtual Ceremony or a Virtual Video that they can share within the school districts. They hope that with whatever press they do, they include the Military Times, Stars & Stripes, Installation Public Affairs Offices, and Garrison Commanders. Then they will know that the information is reaching the School Liaison Officers and then the military families will get this information. Julie Fulton said that they did get permission from Dr. Mullennix that DPI is going to recognize Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) school if they want to apply. She wanted to make sure that Cumberland County had that information. Julie Fulton said that Dr. Mullennix said that she was going to extend the deadline for those DoDEA schools to July.

Purple Staff Star Schools Awards

- 7th State with a Purple Star or Military-Friendly School Designation
- Number of Applications: 130
- Number of Awards: 121
 - 112 Public Schools
 - 9 Charter Schools
- Awaiting Guidance from NC DPI & NC Governor's Office
 - Timelines Impacted by COVID-19
 - Promotion/Press Release – TBD
 - Awards Ceremony; Originally April 27, New Recognition TBD
 - School Report Card – In progress
 - Physical Awards/Banners – TBD

Remote Enrollment:

Valerie Nasser gave an update on the Remote Registration. She said that with the current stay in place order which has been extended until June 30th, they wanted to ensure that as a State they were promoting within the School Liaisons network that they have remote registration available. Especially for those students who might be coming into high school and they don't have to wait until after June 30th. She said that Craven County added the PowerSchool add on and they will be rolling out the Virtual

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Remote Enrollment on May 4th. They are trying to ensure that everyone coming from other installations that we have the Remote Registration and they can apply to any of our schools by the remote enrollment. Julie Fulton said that the June 30th date for Permanent Change of Station (PCS) is a start date and is re-evaluated every 15 days. It could back up and start sooner. They are looking at families that will PCS into September and October and the regular Summer moves will not happen. They are going to have some unique registration issues, especially with high school students. They want the Counselors aware of all the unique situations there may be. Chairman Kirk Warner asked if DPI could put out this information to manage the issue? Rollie Sampson said that this issue is currently be talked about at DPI. DPI has put together a transition team to talk about incoming students that might find themselves in these particular situations. She said that some of the Superintendents have been contacted for input. This is something that we can bring up. The law allows us to enroll a student with PCS orders even if they are not physically here. They interpret that as liaison to include retirement orders. But not all of the districts interpret it that way. Valerie Nasser said that in her district they do allow their students to pick the school that they do think they are going to attend for high school. Then if we have to adjust later we can.

Military Child: K-12 Education (NC Military Liaison Counselors)

Valerie Nasser said that she received an email that the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3) meeting would be held Virtually on May 4th. They are checking with the Stakeholders to see if they can attend remotely via Microsoft Teams on May 4 at 9:45 AM. Chairman Warner said that he is looking forward to hearing about the meeting and to let him know if there is anything that needs to be taken to the NCMAC meeting on May 19th.

Chairman Warner asked if anyone had any legislative updates for the committee? Julie Fulton said that she knew that Rep Cleveland was working on legislation for the Military School Identifier for homeschool students. She said he had the draft language, but she is not sure what is going to happen with the short session. Chairman Warner said that at the last NCMAC meeting the Commission had signed Resolutions for 3 different legislative documents. Kelly Jackson said that the Legislature are scheduled to return on April 28 and maybe for only a few days. She will try to get more information on how long the legislators will be in session.

Chairman Warner said that one of the Quality of Life Priorities is housing for veterans and servicemembers (on and off base housing). He said that Arnold Gordon-Bray has connected us with someone who is working on that from another angle. His thought is that this is more veterans oriented but we are going to reach out to her. This is the one priority that we have not talked about a lot. He would like to get some feedback on housing from Julie Fulton if she had something to add. Julie Fulton said that Mike Scalise would have more information on this matter. She knows that they are still coming back from Hurricane Florence, They have lot of housing offline at this time. Some of the housing is under repair and some of it will be demolished. They have less hosing available for our families on the installation. Mike Scalise said that right now it is what it is. Are you asking about specific base housing or construction at large? He said that the base housing goes through Atlantic Marine Corps Communities (AMCC) and Lincoln who are our partner. There was some destruction and numbers were driven down because of Florence damage but the number of houses that will be retained on the installation actually reflect the requirement. So, it is not going to generate specific ease on housing

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waiting lists. The houses that are going to be removed that are standing are the older houses and built in the 1950s. They are not high on the interest list. That is actually a positive thing when it looks at us losing numbers. Chairman Warner said that was a good report but is there anything the NCMAC should be doing about housing, including off base housing. Mike Scalise said that Julie Fulton said something earlier. The Secretary of Defense's stop move order of June 30th will be reviewed every 15 days. Then the Service Components are going to have to prioritize the moves based on their needs. There is going to be a circus this year for PCS orders. For some of the supporting establishment folks that would be normally be executing PCS orders this Summer will be executing those orders in September – November which will be an impact on school registration as well as base housing. That will be a big challenge this year. Chairman Warner said that he appreciated the information. Julie Fulton said that this issue needs to be sent to DPI for their awareness. That they are going to have that delay and DPI will be doing their teacher allotments based on student population. We need to make sure that they are aware that they can have more students coming after the 20 day count or 10 day count. Chairman Warner said that we need to encourage remote enrollment as early as possible. Maybe the early enrollment count can be used for the teacher allotments. Also, the bases need to encourage the early enrollment. Chairman Warner also said that maybe the bases can put out the early registration information to these families as soon as possible. Mike Scalise said that he and Julie Fulton would talk about how they can get that information out to families. That could be part of their social media. He also said that this topic could be a good topic for the North Carolina Commander's Council (NCCC) in May.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTIONS (DPI) SUPPORT TO MILITARY FAMILIES: DOUG TAGGART

No update from the Department of Public Instruction.

TEACHER ADVISOR TO THE GOVERNOR: LATANYA PATTILLO

LaTanya Pattillo introduced herself to the committee members. She is Governor Cooper's teacher advisor. She is part of the policy team. There is a Policy Advisor for every agency, so she does work closely with Darryl Childers who is the Military and Veteran Affairs Policy Advisor but does not cover education issues. She also works very closely with Jeff Coltrane who is their Senior Education Advisor who has been running point on most of the emergency response issues that have come up due to COVID-19.

Action to Combat COVID-19 Pandemic in K-12 Public Education

Executive Order 117:

- Issued March 14, 2020
- All K-12 public schools closed until March 30, 2020
 - Included charter schools and lab schools
 - Did not include virtual charter schools, NCVPS, DHHS schools, DPS schools, or private schools.
- Created the Governor's Education and Nutrition Working Group.

Executive Order 117: Guidance from State Board of Education

- March 16-30, 2020 were by default to be "optional teacher workdays."
- Local Education Agency (LEAs) may reclassify days to mandatory teacher workdays or annual leave days as needed.

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- Employees remain in work status and are eligible to be paid.
- LEAs should provide opportunities for remote work to the extent feasible and/or reassign employees to safe work environments with appropriate duties.
- School facilities are closed as instructional settings but may be used for other purposes as designed by local boards of education.

Governor's Education and Nutrition Working Group:

- Co-Chaired by Susan Gale Perry from DHHS and Dr. David Stegall from DPI.
- Mission: Ensure the health, safety, educational needs and well-being of children during school or childcare closure as directed by Governor Cooper's Executive Order 117.
- Goals:
 - Ensure families have access to safe, affordable childcare and out-of-school-time care options, especially our healthcare workers and other front-line workers.
 - Ensure children have access to nutritious food while schools and childcare programs are closed.
 - Ensure children continue to participate in structured learning while schools and childcare programs are closed

Executive Order 120:

- Issued March 23, 2020.
- Extended school closures period until May 15, 2020.
- Governor also directed State Board of Education in collaboration with DPI to develop a plan to:
 - Develop a plan to ensure access to a quality education for students through the remainder of the school year.
 - Provide students with remote learning while school building are closed.
 - Ensure that all schools employees – including janitors, bus drivers, teaching assistances and cafeteria workers - - will work in safe environments and be paid.

Flexible Funding for Public School Response:

- Created \$50 million flexible funding allotment on March 24, 2020.
- Funds can be used for:
 - Child nutrition services
 - Remote learning
 - Emergency childcare
 - Cleaning and sanitizing
- Granted additional flexibility in other key allotment categories, including Textbooks and Digital Resources, School Technology, Transportation, At-Risk, Disadvantaged Student Supplemental Funding (DSSF), and Low-Wealth Supplemental Funding.

Questions and Resources:

Education Resources: NC DPI COVID-19 Response and Resources.

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Chairman Warner thanked LaTanya Pattillo for her presentation. He really appreciated the nutrition information.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (DHHS): HAYLEY YOUNG AND MADHU VULIMIRI
Hayley Young and Madhu Vulimiri from DHHS gave a presentation to the committee.

Overview of DHHS Strategic Goals

- Advance the health and well-being of North Carolinians utilizing the programmatic tools of our Department
- Build an innovative, coordinated, and whole-person centered system that addresses medical and non-medical drivers of health.
- Turn the tide on North Carolina's opioid crisis.
- Ensure all NC children get a healthy start and develop to their full potential in safe and nurturing families, schools and communities.
- Achieve operational excellence.
- These goals support key work to:
 - Buy health for people through the Medicaid program, including working with underserved communities to improve access to quality health care and reduce health disparities.
 - Safeguard public health by protecting communities from communicable and chronic diseases, epidemics, and contaminated food/water.
 - Protect the safety, security and well-being of children and vulnerable adults.
 - Support individuals with disabilities and older adults in leading healthy and fulfilling lives.
 - Promote family economic independence and self-sufficiency.
 - Ensure high standards in the health care facilities we operate or regulate.

DHHS Key Services:

With over 260 services, DHHS touches the lives of virtually every North Carolina from birth through the end of life. This includes:

- Medicaid
- Foster care
- Prenatal programs
- Child development/early education programs
- Food and nutrition benefits
- Regulation of healthcare facilities

Education & Nutrition Working Group:

Mission: Ensure the health, safety, educational needs and well-being of children during school or childcare closure as directed by Governor Cooper's Executive Order 117.

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Goals:

- Ensure families have access to safe, affordable childcare and out-of-school-time care options, especially our healthcare workers and other front-line workers.
- Ensure children have access to nutritious food while schools and childcare programs are closed.
- Ensure children continue to participate in structured learning while schools and childcare programs are closed.

Access to Nutritious Food:

Meals at School Nutrition Sites

- Families needing food assistance can text FOODNC or COMIDA to 877-877 to find pick up meals near them.
- Map of meal sites from No Kid Hungry.

School Nutrition Sites providing meals

- 115 public school districts, 33 charter schools, 35 community partners continue to provide school meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks).
- Served over 11 million meals over past month.
- Districts offering meals in different ways – grab and go, yellow school bus delivery.

For Families Receiving Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) Benefits

- Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) benefits is a federal food assistance program that provides low-income families the food they need. Families can apply for FNS benefits online.
- All families currently receiving FNS benefits received the maximum amount allowed for March and April based on their household size). NC DHHS has already issued \$75 million in benefits to 400,000 households with 850,000 individuals.
- In May, families will be able to buy food online at retailers like Walmart and Amazon using FNS benefits.

Pandemic-Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT):

Pandemic-EBT program for children who usually receive free and reduced lunch.

- Families will receive a total \$250 per child on an EBT card for help buying groceries.
- Can use EBT card at most grocery stores (if authorized for EBT).
- Families do not need to apply.
 - Families already receiving FNS benefits will get an additional benefit on their EBT card.
 - Families not receiving FNS benefits will receive an EBT card in the mail.
- Possibility of additional benefits if schools closed beyond May 15.

Food Banks & Meals on Wheels:

- Food banks continue to serve families in need.
- Meals on Wheels continues to serve vulnerable seniors.
 - Some counties continue to provide hot meals daily.
 - Most counties shifted to having volunteers drop off several meals to minimize direct contact.

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- Assistance for Food Banks:
 - National Guard deployed this week to ensure food banks, Meals on Wheels, and school sites can get enough food.
 - USDA will provide 22 trucks of food to distribute to all seven food banks in June.

Access to Remote Learning:

UNC-TV At Home Learning

- UNC-TV and NCDPI partnering to provide free, curriculum-informed, over-the-air content that is widely accessible (especially for students without internet).
- Each weekday, UNC-TV's NC channel serve students
 - 8AM – 1PM for 4th through 8th grade
 - 1PM – 6 PM for 9th through 12th grade

Educational Resources for Parents

- FAQs for Parents.
- DPI Remote Learning Site.
- Resources for Early Learning: Weekly Remote Learning activities for children birth to 2nd grade.
- Resources for Internet Access
 - Internet Offerings Map
 - List of Public Wi-Fi Access Locations by County

Mental Health Resources:

- Hope4NC Helpline (1-855-587-3463)
 - Connects North Carolinians to mental health resources
 - Available 24/7 to speak to a live person
- Hope4Healers Helpline (919-226-2002)
 - NC licensed therapists providing emotional support to health care workers, first responders, and others on the front line experiencing stress.
- If someone is in crisis or feeling suicidal, they should call 911 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255.

Access to Child Care:

Child Care Available to Essential Workers

- Childcare programs had to apply to be emergency childcare providers agreeing to the following:
 - Meet health guidelines and have adequate staff and supplies to care for children
 - Serve children of essential workers
 - Give priority to families who were enrolled in childcare prior to COVID-19 to return to their program
 - Waive subsidy parent co-payments
- Families can call Child Care Hotline (1-888-600-1685) to find local care options, available M-F from 8AM-5PM.

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Financial Assistance for Child Care Available:

- Available in April and May
- Military families are considered essential workers and would qualify.
- Financial assistance available to essential workers whose income is below 300% of the poverty line and who have no other childcare options.
- Parent application forms available in English and Spanish.
- Parents should complete form and submit to childcare provider, copies also available at provider locations.

Other Resources:

- Statewide COVID-19 website
- NC DHHS COVID-19 website
- NC DPI COVID-19 website

Chairman Warner thanked Hayley Young and Madhu Vulimiri for all the great work that is being done for our military families.

NEW BUSINESS:

Chairman Warner said that the committee would be reviewing their priorities that are connected with the Commission's strategic plan. The priorities for the QOL are K-12 Education, Adequate Housing, Spousal, Dependents, Servicemembers, Opportunities and Challenges, Resiliency, and Transitioning Support. Each one of them have subsequent priorities. Those are our focus of effort.

Kevin Bruch said there was not much going on from his side of the house. With the legislature coming back in on April 28th. He had talked with Sally-Ann Gupta about legislation that Rep Cleveland had about In-State continuity. We will see what happens with that legislation. He came to Raleigh in February and spoke to the Program Evaluation Division (PED) Oversight Committee on the occupational spouse licensure bill. They had requested some comments on that. We plan to sit back and see what happens in the short session. Chairman Warner asked about the Spousal Licensure issue, was there any particular areas of licensure that were of concern? Kevin Bruch said that they have passed some good legislation. Senate Bill 230 from last year required a report and then some suggestions. The report is now out and that is what the suggested language draft bill is. With over 180-200 occupations that require license and no overarching agency, it is hit or miss. Secretary of Defense Esper decided that his goal was to have a military spouse be able to get a license within 30 days with minimal paperwork as long as they had a license in good standing. NC has passed some good legislation for teachers.

Kelly Jackson said that she had been listening to the House Select Committee on Education and was sharing that information with this committee. She is also going to have a Teams meeting with Dr. Flood, Non-Public Instruction on May 5. The DMVA is honoring the military children on April 30th and information has been sent out on this event. Kelly Jackson also thanked LaTanya Pattillo, Hayley Young and Madhu Vulimiri for participating in the meeting.

Kirk Warner said that he would work with Kelly Jackson on items for the NCMAC meeting on May 19.

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ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Warner adjourned the meeting at 11:26 pm.